

CO-OPERATIVE WOMEN'S GUILD



MAGAZINE

ISSUE NO. 6

HELLO GUILDSWOMEN

Once again we are approaching Congress, and I hope your magazine will reach you before you set out. The N.E.C. are really proud of you all; the number of vests tops and blankets you have sent to the "Dustbin Babies", Ethiopia, and Save the Children Fund have been fantastic, and from the promises rolling in there will be a grand display of more at Congress. In this magazine you will find a "Thank You Letter" from Miss Joyce Darlington, a Co-helper of Mother Teresa, and know how much your efforts are appreciated. At the same time I know from your letters, that local charities have received your help and that you have played your part in our campaigns against the Sunday Opening of Shops, the bill to reform Social Security, and others you feel strongly about. I wish you could all have been with the N.E.C. when your National President presented your petitions for the "Save our Sundays" campaign to Lord Graham and other Labour and Co-operative Lords on the Terrace.

Once again my thanks to all of you who have written such nice letters to me about your magazine, and how nice it is to know what the other guilds are doing. I am sure this is what our young guildswomen wanted when they mooted the idea. I am sure too you will like the poem "A Nurses' Reply" to the Crabbit Old Woman, as much as I did, read them both together, it's very touching. I am, however, in 'Hot Water' from a couple of guilds, "How could you have let 'Fairy Liquid' slip by you" they said, "what's wrong with Co-op Liquid?" Well I'm sorry if you don't approve, but I printed the hint as it was sent to me, and I do know it works. It may well be that like myself she has a very sensitive skin and that's why I use Fairy Liquid; the Co-op one and others bring me out in a rash. "Find one that suits you," said my Doctor, "and stick to it," which I do. I gather too from letters sent to me that as so many shops have been closed many members live miles away from their Co-op store and cannot always shop there. So you see ladies, things are not always what they seem, so I hope you will forgive me, and I assure you I buy everything from my Co-op just up the road. So far I'm one of the lucky ones, but it has been threatened. See you at Congress.

Vi Aldous (Ed), 43 Whitehill Road, Cambridge CB5 8LU.

COVER COMPETITION

We were very pleased with the entries for the Magazine Cover, they were very good and very imaginative. Most of you had used the "Peace Theme" and the judges thought this appropriate as it's the United Nations Peace Year. The Dove

is a difficult bird to draw as I am sure you found out. Five Pounds will find its way to the winner very shortly.

The winning entry came from Mrs Joan Doyle, Erith Guild, Bexleyheath, Kent, and I am sure you will all join me in congratulating her.

BENEFITS FOR MOTHERS AND BABIES

Thousands of pregnant women, mothers and babies look set to lose their benefits in the next two years. The Government's Bill to reform Social Security, which is being debated in parliament now, makes a major onslaught on the maternity benefits which women have fought for over many years. All three benefits for pregnancy — maternity grant, maternity allowance and free milk and vitamins — are to be cut, and child benefit, the only universal benefit for families, is being allowed to fall in value.

Maternity Grant

Britain's maternity benefits are already inadequate. All mothers receive the £25 maternity grant, but it has not been increased since 1969 and now makes only a token contribution to the costs of a new baby. Women on Supplementary Benefit can get some extra help through a single payment for baby items. But if the Government's Bill goes through, the maternity grant and single payments will be abolished. Instead there will be a means-tested grant of £75 for families on Income Support (the new name for supplementary benefit) or on Family Credit (the new name for family income supplement). Around 500,000 women will lose the maternity grant, and some will get no benefits at all for a new baby. The £75 doesn't offer much help to unemployed families or those on very low wages. DHSS guidelines about minimum clothes and equipment needed for a new baby give a list of items which cost between £159 and £167. Parents will know that this is a very modest sum for all the things a baby needs, but in future, parents on the lowest incomes will have to buy everything out of only £75.

Maternity Allowance

Working mothers-to-be can claim a weekly benefit, the Maternity Allowance, based on National Insurance contributions they paid approximately two years before the birth of their baby. The Allowance, £29.15 per week, is paid for up to 18 weeks, beginning eleven weeks before

the birth. Although the weekly payment is low, this benefit is worth over £500 in total to those who qualify. Under the new proposals, up to 80,000 mothers will lose it. Three changes are proposed for the Maternity Allowance. First, the payment period will be more flexible so that mothers can choose when they stop work without losing any week's Allowance. This is a change that women will welcome. Second, responsibility for paying the Maternity Allowance will be transferred to employers, following the model of statutory sick pay. Most pregnant working women will claim statutory Maternity Allowance from their firm, and there will be a state Maternity Allowance for other women with recent work records. Pregnancy is often the first time a woman claims any benefits and creating two sorts of Maternity Allowance will add to the confusion facing pregnant women at work. The experience of statutory sick pay and of maternity pay, too, suggests that many employers are not going to be a reliable source of information nor especially efficient at administering the benefit. In some cases employers anxious to avoid the paperwork involved in paying the Maternity Allowance may simply sack pregnant women who have been in work long enough to qualify for the Allowance, but not long enough to be protected against unfair dismissal. The third change planned for the Maternity Allowance is a change in the qualifying conditions. A recent work test will substitute for the National Insurance contributions requirement. Women will have to have worked for six months in the year before the claim for Maternity Allowance and to have paid National Insurance contributions during that time. At present, some women receive the Maternity Allowance even though they gave up work two years ago, while others who started work within the last year or so, do not qualify. A more recent work test makes sense. What does not make sense is excluding women who have been unable to work because

of unemployment or sickness. At the moment, credited contributions paid to women who are receiving unemployment or sickness benefit can count towards a future Maternity Allowance. If the Government proposals become law, unemployed women will have no chance of getting the Maternity Allowance, even if they have been signing on as unemployed and actively looking for work. This exclusion makes the changes look more like a cost-cutting exercise than an attempt to improve provision for working pregnant women.

Pregnant women on the lowest incomes often have to rely more on general means-tested benefits than on specific benefits for maternity. But there is one exception — free milk and vitamins for pregnant women and children under 5 — which were first introduced in wartime to safeguard the health of pregnant women and babies. Pregnant women on supplementary benefit or family income supplement or on low incomes can claim them. The Government now plans to abolish free welfare milk and vitamins for all families except those on Income Support. Family Credit will, it is said, be enhanced to compensate the loss to families on low incomes. Around 250,000 mothers and children, all on low incomes, will lose this

benefit. Among those who will suffer most, as they receive no compensation from changes in other benefits, are school-girl mothers and low waged families expecting their first baby. Babies born to these families already face greater risks of illness and early death than better-off babies. Among babies born to unskilled workers the risk of early death is twice as high as among babies of professional families and the risk to babies of very young mothers is even greater. Whittling away at basic maternity benefits can only increase the disadvantage faced by babies born to these vulnerable mothers.

The proposals in the Government Bill represent a serious attack on support for pregnancy and for children, support which has given us healthier mothers and babies. Our children are our future and we should be looking to improve provision for their needs. European maternity benefits put our own to shame; in France and Luxembourg, for example, all pregnant women receive maternity grants of £400—£500. British mothers and babies deserve to be up there with the best, but instead time is running out for the meagre benefits we have.

Lyn Durward
Information Officer,
The Maternity Alliance



Mrs Audrey Tucker, Chairman of Ipswich District, handing over blankets to Miss Joyce Darlington at the South Eastern Sectional Rally recently.

PEN FRIEND

A plea for a pen friend for Mrs L. Clark of Cheltenham please. She is in her 60's and recently widowed and would be most grateful to hear from you. She would like a pen friend from Liverpool or somewhere up North, someone who doesn't just sit around knitting, although she likes to do that sometimes and her interests she says are very varied.

I would like to get some replies for our members who have asked for Pen Friends. (ED.)

GUILD AID FOR THE DUSTBIN BABIES

I welcome this opportunity to thank Guild members for their tremendous contribution to the "dustbin" babies knitting appeal which was launched last year.

India conjures up many ideas — for some people, the Taj Mahal; Everest and the Himalayas; Kashmir; the river Ganges; elephants, tigers and monkeys, curry spices and tea; ivory; carpets; the days of the Raj and Maharajahs. The Co-operative Women's Guild had just a single thought and chose to support the work of Mother Teresa of Calcutta and her Missionaries of Charity among the poor, destitute, sick and homeless on this vast sub-continent, and the refugees in Ethiopia. Their involvement as Co-workers of Mother Teresa has brought me into contact with Guild members in the Lancashire and South-Eastern Sections, and it is heartening to find such enthusiasm, dedication and concern, which is reflected throughout the Guild, for people facing famine, disease and death.

Guildswomen across the country have responded with love to the poorest of the poor and have reached out to touch the Untouchables, as the Harijan caste are known, demonstrating yet again that they are people who care and have compassion. The colourful woollies and blankets are a joy to see and will bring much needed comfort to the recipients. A Guild Banner at Toad Lane Pioneers Museum, Rochdale, sums up Guild Aid so well — "United endeavour makes all things possible" — and the dream of helping these children has been realised by the willing and caring hands of many groups and individuals, and I thank the Co-operative Women's Guild most sincerely for its generous support.

**Miss Joyce Darlington,
Assistant Information Officer,
Co-operative Union.**

The National President and NEC members delivering a minibus load of sacks of knitted vests, tops and blankets to a co-helper of Mother Theresa for the Dustbin Babies.



Around the Branches

Radford Guild writes to tell me that District Secretary Mrs Sylvia Brennan and Mrs Penny Berry, District Member have formed a Slim and Trim class for guildswomen. Ages range from 20s to late 70s, and from just over 7½ stone to 16 stone. The guild sister who is our lightest in weight is also our eldest in age and comes to keep herself fit, and for the happy company and atmosphere this class provides. Mrs Brennan sorts out recipes and tips for weight loss, and we all go on the scales each week if we wish. Mrs Berry gives us our exercises and has taught us sequences to music.

We had our first display at our District Social, we all look fine in our black leotards and tights with our badge with rainbow colours. We were only sorry that Penny was taken ill before Xmas and was not able to be there to see us. God willing Penny will have been a guild member for 50 years come January 1987. Members of her mother's guild paid her one pound share for her 14th birthday. She has been a very active member holding many guild offices, and is currently a Director of her Society and Chairman of her Guild. Her fellow guildswomen wish her better health for 1986, and feel to see herself mentioned in our magazine would be a tonic for her.

Mrs Joan Sale, Hon. Sec.

Mrs E. Maddison would like to thank the members of the West Cornforth Guild through the magazine. She tells me, I was married on the 9th of November 1985 and all the members attended my wedding, giving me a lovely present, and waiting at the tables at my reception. All the years I've been a widow they've been very good friends as well as guild members, and I appreciate everything they've done for me. A very big Thank You to West Cornforth Guild from their Mrs E. Maddison.

Abbots Langley Branch sent me a copy of their Annual Report after their AGM. They certainly had a full and interesting year, taking part in the National Campaign, knitting vests and tops for the 'Dustbin Babies', and are now knitting blankets for the "Third World". Their special event for 1985 was to raise money for the "Mount Vernon Breast Cancer Clinic Appeal", and with weekly auctions and a Garden Party held at the home of Mrs I. Garratt they raised £125. However, they did not forget the National Project, or their local charities. They had visits to hospitals, Watford Town Hall, various Section and District events, Illustrated Talks, on Corfu, Churches and Castles, Hong Kong, Oxfam and Setting the Scene at Watford Palace.

They had talks on such subjects as Work of a JP, Wardrobe Planning, Worcester China, Miners' Songs and Pam Ayres-style Poetry among many others. They also fitted in Guild Business, social afternoons, quizzes, sales and parties. They would like to mention their 'Abbots Songsters' drawn from their guild members, who are willing to provide pleasant, easy to listen to popular songs to their own taped organ accompaniment for about one hour. They do not charge a specific amount but must ask for help with the cost of the minibus they hire for travelling. If you are interested, write to Mrs Iris Garratt, 131 Horseshoe Lane, Garston, Watford, Herts. WD2 7HT.

Connie Wilson, Branch Sec.

In response to the Guild Resolution passed at Congress to place Peace Poppies at local memorials, the Kent and Surrey District placed a wreath at Croydon's Memorial. On a cold windy morning, several of our members were there to see our wreath of Peace Poppies standing out among the traditional red ones.

Trudy Stewart, Thornton Heath Branch

"A true co-operator." It was a tablecloth that inspired these words, inadequate though they be. The cloth covers the table at our weekly Guild meeting, and is a constant reminder of our dear Isabel Briddick who died October 1985 in her 85th year. How patiently she embroidered all our signatures on that cloth!, and how patiently she worked all her life for the Co-operative Women's Guild. Coming from a mining family in Tyneside she knew the needs of the working classes. She took part in the Jarrow Hunger March, and held many offices in the Guild, Member Relations Committee and the District Council. It was a stroke of

good luck for us when she came to Rochdale and joined our guild and became our secretary, serving us faithfully for more than twenty years. Whenever we needed a delegate Mrs Briddick was always ready to go, no matter if it was hail, rain, winds or snow, she never let us down right up to a month before she died.

We celebrated our Centenary in 1983 and were thankful she was with us, for without her efforts we would never have reached it. Her name is in our Evergreen Book, and her memory will be evergreen to all who knew and loved our Mrs Briddick.

A. Pickup, Rochdale Branch

WORTLEY HALL WEEKEND SCHOOL

Members of Manor Guild attended a weekend school arranged by the Woodcraft Folk of Sheffield and Leeds Societies, to help members understand the work done in the Third World and how they could help. The Clear Unit, Stanford Hall: promotes Co-operatives overseas, and how their work should be part of the school's curriculum. OXFAM: a speaker told of their work to help the poorest of the poor, and how they were called upon to help in all disasters. Christian Aid also provided a speaker on their work, how they helped refugees and sent money to the Third World regardless of whether they are Christian groups or not.

Sheffield Green Party Speaker pointed out a lot of fruit was sent to our country that we don't really need. We were self sufficient during the war and should be again. (Sorry, but I think a lot of us would not agree with that statement, I remember the oranges, bananas, dried fruit that I was glad to see if not very often, for my children's health, and my mother's diet as a diabetic. ED.)

Much was learned over the weekend, and I was given an insight into the activities of the Charities. A lovely weekend in lovely surroundings.

Mrs A. Wood, Manor Guild, Sheffield



Members of the East Hampshire District Women's Guild joined their fellows throughout the country on November 10 in placing a wreath of white peace poppies on their local cenotaph. The white silk poppy with the word 'peace' in the centre was a symbol adopted by many of the Co-operative Women's Guilds for Remembrance Day this year. The Portsea Island Society's florist made the wreath of poppies and fresh pittosporum which was laid on the Portsmouth War Memorial by the President of the East Hampshire Guild, Mrs Anita Harris.

Birkenhead District Committee arranged a Mock Luncheon before Xmas. Gwyneth writes: We had some very undistinguished guests. Our President, Mrs Dizzie Handkerchief, The Mayoress of Gorsehill who apologised for her husband's absence, she told us he was in bed with flu but on second thoughts she did not know if it was Flo, Lady Bric-a-Brac, The Duchess of Crows Nest, The Lady Sniffalot, Dame Handlebar and the Speaker Mrs Rentagob. If any other Guilds would like to hire her, her address is "Rathole" in the County Catastrophe. To give you an idea of the quality of her speech, here is just a small part of it. "I dare say most of you had a yellow balloon when you were young many years ago — Well the yellow balloon I am going to tell you about is much different. It was to be found on the outskirts of London way back in June 1984. Entertainment was being performed in this yellow balloon, alas we missed the wonderful show, we had arrived half an hour late. Because of the success they had cut the show from an hour to half an hour. Why had it been such a success? Because more entertainers turned up than spectators. What disappointment showed in the faces of the other inmates of the luxury Mansion Shornells when we told them of the wonderful punishment they had missed. There is no need for anybody to be disappointed, we are arranging another expedition to 'Toad in the Hole' next June, bring your own sausages." A vote of thanks was given by Mrs Davy Locker. About 58 Guildswomen attended the Mock Luncheon dressed in attire which would have to be seen to be believed. It was a great success.

Gwyneth Brown, District Treasurer

(May I beg for an invitation to the next one please. ED)

A SPECIAL VISIT

At their October meeting at Head Office the National Executive Committee delivered vests and blankets, sent to Head Office, to their nearest collecting point in Tottenham, North London. The NEC delivered nine large sacks to the parish church in Tottenham, and NEC members were given a very warm welcome by the Parish Priest, the Reverend Davenport. He gave sincere thanks to all guildswomen who had knitted the garments.

The NEC were also introduced to the helpers and children in the playschool which is held each morning on the church premises. NEC members spoke to the children who were from a variety of cultures and joined with them in their prayers. Rev. Davenport also talked about the valuable work of the church in the local community, and raised many questions to which there are no easy answers.

Diane Paskin, Nat. Officer



Lancing Guild held an "Old Tyme" sing-song when they celebrated their 14th birthday. They were very pleased to have Mr Don Ranger among their guests for a very happy afternoon, and hope to see their photo in the magazine.

B. Musgrave, Hon. Sec.

Inkersall Branch writes to say how proud they are of one of their members, Mrs Freda Smith who will have the honour to be Mayoress of Chesterfield in May. It will indeed be an honour for their Guild they tell me, as this will be the second time they have had a member hold this position, the first being Mrs Margaret Meakin in 1980/81.

Chesterfield and District Council of the Co-operative Women's Guild mobilised their six member guilds of Birmingham, Chesterfield, Clay Cross, Inkersall, Holmewood and Staveley to provide clothing for Mother Teresa's Baby Care Fund. The Chairman of the District assembled the guilds' contributions of knitted and crocheted T-shirts, vests, bonnets, blankets and shawls at the West Bars Hall for Mr Percy Hall (President Chesterfield Co-operative Society) to hand over to Mrs Jeannie Macey to be despatched to India. The picture shows Mr Hall, Mrs Jeannie Macey and CWG representatives.

I received the following extracts from a report of Congress held in 1938 at Southampton which I am sure you will find interesting. The President was Mrs Mabel Dale, and her address was on sale for one penny. There were 1,800 delegates, and they pledged themselves to aim at a membership of 100,000. The three main resolutions were, Cancer Research, Cost of Living (More Guns than Butter), and the National Health Insurance Scheme. A telegram was read out from George Lansbury, congratulating the Conference on the splendid lead given to the women of Britain on behalf of security and Peace. Your way is the only way to save the world. Congress honoured Mrs Mary Lawrenson, founder of the Guild, had a collection and instituted a voluntary levy on Branches.

Mrs Sayer, Wimpson



Weymouth Guild member Mrs M. Smith who produces drama for her guild, had the pleasure recently of having her niece Geraldine McEwan television star staying with her in Weymouth. Her career is followed very closely by Weymouth Guild, and they are very proud of their connection with her. Geraldine has strong family ties with Weymouth; she used to spend her school holidays there and says she cannot stay away long. It's been a lovely rest she said, as she packed her bags to re-join the hectic world of acting. She is known for her part as the prim Scottish school teacher Miss Jean Brodie, and she also starred in "Mapp and Lucia", but says her Aunt May, fame hasn't changed her a bit, she is a lovely natural girl and I am one of her biggest fans.

Beverly Gillam, Sec.



Geraldine McEwan with her auntie, Mrs May Smith of Weymouth Guild.

The West Boulevard Guild, Harborne, Birmingham, celebrated their 50th Anniversary late in 1985. To mark the occasion, the Greater Midland Area Board of the Central Midland Society entertained guild members to a meal and a visit to the theatre to see a performance of the musical "Annie". The meal was held at the Society's Sports and Social Club, with guild members receiving greetings from the Society, Member Relations Committee and the CWG District Committee. Each guild member was presented with a gift of towels as a memento. The Guild was also going to hold a super Christmas Party and another trip to the theatre in the New Year.

(Congratulations and I hope the extra celebrations were also enjoyable. ED)

Newland Hull are fortunate in having as their President, Mrs Clarice Scruton, one time secretary of the Yorkshire Section. Although 91 years of age, Mrs Scruton is still very active and attends all our weekly meetings, except when she is busy with her School Governor's duties. On the occasion of her 90th birthday she had the great honour of being given a luncheon at the City's Guildhall by the then Lord Mayor of Hull, Councillor Mrs Frances Brady. The guild members respond to all suggestions made from time to time in the Newsletter, writing to MPs, signing petitions, protesting to the Government, etc. Our "Any Questions" sessions are always informative and lively. We have just sent off three parcels of beautifully knitted blankets to the Bob Geldof "Help the Aged" appeal, and we are determined to have more ready in time for display at Congress. Since the CRS took over our Society, our big Central Store and most of our grocery branches have closed, but we try to be as loyal to the Movement as we possibly can.

Re: Issue No 3: A Mini Guild Member. Allen's Cross Guild Birmingham, also have a "Mini Member" — a Peg Doll Co-op Lady, complete with striped dress, white apron, old-fashioned bun-hair-do, not forgetting basket of Co-op stamps. One afternoon they were shown how to make attractive Peg dolls, by Mrs Owen, a visiting tutor, and these were judged later.

There were many dolls to judge, including Bride, Spanish Dancer and Crinoline dolls, all beautifully dressed, but the one to catch the judges eye was the Co-op Lady, plain and aloof and our mascot. Now she is kept in pride of place at all our meetings.

Elsie Dowson, Allen's Cross Guild
(Worth copying? ED)

The St. Mark's Co-operative Women's Guild held a Carol Service and Party, at which guildswomen from Bristol, Bath and Gloucester and of course Cheltenham took part. The Carol Service was held in the Methodist Church, Gloucester Road, Cheltenham, and Mr C. Barnfield J.P. (President of the Glos. and Severnside Co-op), his wife and representatives from the Board of Directors were present. The Service was conducted by the Rev. Wilson, and the lessons were read by Mrs S. Paine (Bath), Mrs G. Frape and Mrs L. Clark (Cheltenham). It proved a most popular event and the church was full to overflowing. After the service there followed a social evening, refreshments served by members of the St. Mark's Guild.

L. Clark, St. Mark's Guild

(I'm pleased to hear you like your magazine so much. ED)

AN HONOUR FOR MEIR BRANCH

The Meir Branch has been awarded a Certificate by the National Association of Boys' Clubs, to record the thanks of the whole Boys' Clubs Movement for the help and support this Guild has given to "Training Ship Jervis II" SCC in furthering its work for boys and young men.

The Ceremony took place at the ship's unit on February 14th, 1986, and the beautifully framed certificate was presented to me on behalf of my branch by Colonel Jones, Army Cadet Training Officer, Staffordshire Regiment. A most impressive Ceremony, with all sea cadets present, three cheers for Meir Branch and the ship's bell (which we had presented to the unit in October) was rung in our honour.

Ida Bailey, Meir Guild

IT TAKES TIME

One word won't tell folk who you are
You've got to keep on talking
One step won't take you very far,
You've got to keep on walking.
One foot won't make you very tall,
You've got to keep on growing,
One trip to the Guild won't tell you all,
You've got to keep on going.

Anonymous

HARLESTON GUILD

At Harleston Guild, we have lots of fun,
A nice cup of tea and sometimes a bun
Margie in the chair, with Rosie her right hand
We really are a happy band.

We go on lots of outings, a meal sometimes as well
To belong to Harleston Guild, it's really really swell.
We play lots of games of bingo, a raffle run as well
By Mrs Betty Gosling, doesn't she do well?

So if you feel like joining, The Rec at half past two,
Is really where you ought to be.
A warm welcome awaits you.

Mrs B. Gostling

(Don't let them kid you, they work as well, I know. ED)

A FISHY STORY

Last summer my husband George and I had been out for a day's drive in the country and on returning home decided to have one of my favourite meals, "fish and chips". As we approached our local shopping centre I called at the fishmongers and bought two lovely plaice fillets. On arrival home I soon got started on the preparations for cooking the meal. I got the chip pan out and the oil – and I had plenty of chips and things were getting organised when there was a ring at the doorbell, and George announced we had visitors. John and Betty who we had not seen for some time had also been out for the day and passing through our area on their way home decided to call for a chat. George welcomed them and on entering the house Betty remarked, "Oh something smells good, have we called at an inconvenient time?" to which my husband replied, "Dear me no," and without further thought invited them to share our meal which they readily accepted. When George came into the kitchen and told me I was at a loss to know how to make four portions from the two fillets: I could easily prepare more chips. He suggested that we give our guests the fish and we would have egg and chips. Thinking this may cause them some embarrassment, I sent George back to entertain them while I thought out what I could do, as by this time the shops were closed.

After a little while I had an idea which I hoped would succeed. I cut two slices of bread the same shape and size of the fillets, dipping them in egg and bread-crumbs together with the fish and frying them all together at the same time, so that the 'mock fish' would absorb some of the flavour of the plaice. When George came into the kitchen again I explained what I had done, telling him to be most careful when serving, to be sure and give Betty and John the plaice on which I would put a fair size sprig of parsley. The

meal looked very appetising as I carried it into the dining room, with small sprigs of parsley on the side of the serving dish together with lemon, and on each of the two fillets of plaice I put a larger spray of parsley. All went well, the wine was poured and George proceeded to serve the meal as I had arranged without hesitation. The fillets to our guests and the mock fish to ourselves. The meal commenced and everyone was happy and there was plenty to talk about. Betty and John remarked on how much they were enjoying it – a lovely finish to their day out and to ours as well. George and I carefully forked our way through our fillets, covering now and again with chips so as not to give the game away. John had retired early last year so was eager to tell of all the various places they had visited and how much they were enjoying his retirement. The first course over, and to me a relief that all went well and to coin a phrase it was "Success on a Plate". George cleared the empty plates while I brought in the sweet, ice cream and fresh fruit. We then adjourned to the lounge to exchange news over coffee, and browse through each others' snapshots. Time passed quickly as it always does when you are enjoying the occasion. It was beginning to get late and our friends decided they must make their departure, so seeing them to the car and with fond farewells, we all agreed it had been a most delightful evening.

Their visit was quite unexpected, but in spite of everything all had gone off all right and Betty was full of praise for the excellent meal. As they waved us goodbye, I am sure they were quite unaware of the fishy story we had enacted that evening. Needless to say, George and I had a jolly good laugh as we shared the washing up and have done so many times since, especially when we sit down to our favourite meal of "plaice and chips".

JUST ONE DAY IN THE LIFE OF A NEC MEMBER

It began with a phone call from Head Office, "Can you represent the Guild at a Potato Marketing Board demonstration in North Yorkshire?"

"Yes, I'm ready, willing and able."

Head Office Voice. "Better take your wellingtons."

ME. "Oh — !!! where is it being held?"

H.O. "On a disused aerodrome at Skipton on Swale near Thirsk."

Came the day I was up at dawn, set off complete with wellies, plus a large "Guest" medallion on my chest. I got the bus OK and also the train to York; Thirsk trains I was told were few, but luckily I had arrived just before one was due. It was a nice bright day and I enjoyed the short journey to Thirsk, a very small station, and the porter rushed to help me down the steep drop. Where do I get a bus to Skipton on Swale I asked. Oh we have no bus service round here was his reply, but a taxi meets every train. Thinking of the money I said, "Is it in walking distance?" "Oh no it's five or six miles and then some to the aerodrome, better have the taxi." So as I had already travelled a long way and there was no train back to York until 3 o'clock I got into the taxi. The driver was a friendly farmer and agreed to take me both ways for £6.00. After what seemed miles he pointed to some flag flying in the far distance, "That's where it is," he said, and eventually we turned onto a muddy cart track with huge puddles and very bumpy. I could now see in the distance some large marquees beneath the fluttering flags, and after a while we came to bales of straw across the track and a notice saying "No traffic after this point" and the entrance to a huge car park or rather field. He dropped me off there and promised to pick me up at that point in time to catch my train.

I sat on the bales and put on my wellies, stowed my hat in the bag and started off across the aist-high cornfield skirting as

many puddles as possible. I heard one of the marshalls say, they had sold over 2,000 parking tickets but were expecting 5,000 by the end of the day, so no wonder the path was well trodden and, after two stormy days, muddy. I was pleased it was a nice sunny day, but when I got over the fields and onto the open ground before the marquees, the sun had dried the ground and with all the tractors milling about it was a real dust storm. I decided to take my life in my hands and to somehow get over to those marquees. I introduced myself and was invited to look around and then come back and take lunch with the other guests. I very much enjoyed looking round and my lunch, but I was relieved to see my taxi return. I had changed back to my shoes to go in for lunch and found they were really in a mess, so when I arrived at Thirsk station I used nearly a box of "Wet Ones" cleaning them and myself up. This is only one day's experience, I could write a book "Maybe I will", meanwhile DON'T go on the NEC if you want a quiet well ordered life.

Jeannie Macey

Treacle Toffee

4 oz butter

8 oz granulated sugar

3 tablespoons black treacle

2 tablespoons vinegar

Melt butter in large saucepan, add all the other ingredients and stir till sugar has dissolved. Bring to boil and boil quickly for about ten minutes or until a little mixture dropped into cold water forms a hard ball. Pour into a greased 7" square tin, mark into pieces while still warm. Break when cold.

Mrs Olive Branall, Wednesfield Branch

(Sadly this lady has since died)



DELEGATES from throughout Scotland turned out to say farewell to Mrs Mary Lonsdale, who is retiring as the General Secretary of the Scottish Co-operative Women's Guild.

Mrs Lonsdale, a JP from Springboig, Glasgow has given 34 years' service to the movement and has been responsible for co-ordinating

the activities of all the Scottish branches.

In a presentation at Guild headquarters in Morrison Street, Glasgow, Mrs Lonsdale received a cheque from both the movement as a whole and from the English Guild. She also received a brooch from the Guild's Central Council.

Top officials praised her dedi-

cation, particularly for building links over the years between the Guild and the Save the Children Fund.

Left to right are: Miss Diane Pascan, of the English Guild, Mrs Betty Reid, National President of the Scottish Guild, Mrs Lonsdale and Mrs Jean Grear of the Central Council Committee.

SOMEBODY ELSE

I read this in a Friendship Book. Our local church has many committees, all of which do very useful work. There is a very popular person on all the committees who gets volunteered for any post and for any special task. He is Mr Somebody Else. When we wanted a treasurer for the fete committee, we all looked at each other and left it to Mr Somebody Else. When the fete committee needed someone to be responsible for publicity we all looked at each other and again left it to Mr Somebody Else. We are not going to have a fete in our village next year because we've left all of the work to Mr Somebody Else.

Is your Guild branch like the Fete Committee?

Diane

HANDY HINTS

The white of an egg on a burn is very good.

M. Coulson, Hastings

When cooking spaghetti always add a tablespoon of oil to the water, this will stop it sticking.

Barbara Fabrizio, Basildon Branch

Housewives believe No 1 and 2 eggs are better value for money. Not so according to a farming report. No 3 eggs are better value because of the same amount of nutrition in all sizes — more water in large eggs. No 3 eggs or smaller boil better than large eggs because they have thicker shells. Hope this will benefit housewives.

Mrs A. Wood, Manor Guild, Sheffield

A NURSES' REPLY

What do we see you ask, what do we see?
Yes, we are thinking when looking at thee.
We may seem to be hard when we hurry and fuss,
But there's many of you and too few of us.
We would like more time to sit by you and talk,
To bath you, and feed you, and help you to walk,
To hear of your lives and things you have done
Your childhood, your husband, your daughter, your son,
But time is against us, there's so much to do —
Patients too many, and nurses too few.
We grieve when we see you so sad and alone
With nobody near you, no friends of your own
We feel all your pain, and know of your fear
That nobody cares now your end is so near.
But nurses are people with feelings as well
And when we're together you'll often hear tell
Of the dearest old gran in the very end bed
And the lovely old dad and the things he has said
We speak with compassion and love and feel sad
When we think of your lives and the joys that you've had
When the time has arrived for you to depart
You leave us behind with an ache in our heart.
When you sleep the long sleep, no more worry or care
There are other old people, and we must be there.
So please understand if we hurry and fuss
There are many of you, and too few of us.

M. Park, Camp Hill Guild

THE OLD AND LONELY

Dear lonely old man
So weak and frail,
Rendered by the seizure
so cruelly assailed.
You like your home and privacy
But alas, relatives and friends
Are otherwise engaged
No time to sit and talk
And give a helping hand
Only God really understands,
All you need are a few willing hands.

They say hospitals are full
And local homes too
And I live so far away
Or help you I would,
All that I can do is pray
That God in his wisdom will help you.
I've seen it all before
So many old frail men and women too
Forgive me Father for my powerless state
And with your wisdom
Guide people to their aid.
Walsall Wood Branch

CO-OPERATIVE WOMEN'S GUILD



MAGAZINE

ISSUE NO.7

Hurrah I've had my first reply to a request for a pen friend, I hope they both enjoy their correspondence. What happened to the rest of you?

After a wet start to the summer, we are having some wonderful weather as I write this and when the magazine reaches you in September most of you will have had your holidays. I hope they will have been warm and wonderful ones. We said "Goodbye" at Congress to Jeannie and Eunice, two wonderful people to have worked with. It was a privilege to have served with them on the N.E.C. but I am sure we shall still be seeing them at Congress and other times. I have received one or two articles that are really too long for our small magazine, I may be able to print one as a serial but to condense the other would spoil it. I have discussed this with the N.E.C. who feel it would make a good discussion paper and we have agreed it be kept at Head Office and a copy would be sent to any branch who wrote in asking for it. Written by Mrs I. Tapp of Honicknowle branch it is headed "The Second Century". Please enclose stamp.

Vi Aldous (Editor)

To Hennie (Former Chairman Lea Valley District)

Dear Hennie I shall miss you so
As will all your guild.
Why oh why does this life end
Is one so quite fulfilled?

Most of your days have been to serve
This most worthy cause
Our women's movement reaches far
So many deserve applause.

I'm really proud to have met you
But wish for many more hours
My husband and I could have listened to
Much wiser thoughts than ours.

Goodbye my friend until we meet
On some future day
No tears I'll shed but hope to fill
Your place in some small way.

Marjorie Barret

Around the Branches



Members of the Cambridge Central Guild gathered at the James Street Social Club Hall, for the presentation of a £56 cheque to the Arthur Rank Hospice. The Guild decided to raise the money after hearing of the treatment and wonderful care some husbands and friends of members had received there. Yvonne Smart, sister at the hospice, gave a talk explaining its work and said the public didn't realise the many aspects of help the hospice gave to patients and families, quite apart from nursing. Mrs Violet Aldous presented the cheque to Sister Smart saying that the Guild prided itself on being a caring organisation, and Sister Smart thanked all members saying that the Hospice was very grateful for the donation.

Vera Lawrence, Secretary

Norwich Central Guild celebrated their 100th Birthday recently with an afternoon tea. Guests included Mrs Vi Aldous,

N.E.C., Mrs Aldrich, District Secretary, and members from local guilds. The chief guest was the Norwich Labour Lady Mayor, who said it was her last official function, and she could not have spent it in more pleasant company. She hoped to be able to represent some of those present in the future as their councillor. The Directors of the Society and the Education Committee were represented by the two brothers so popular among the Norwich District guildswomen. A beautiful iced cake made by a guildswoman was cut and a rag doll dressed beautifully was given by a member for a raffle. Old time Music was played on the organ during and after tea; a very pleasant afternoon.

Eileen Matless, Norwich Central

St Marks Guild had a very interesting talk about the "Old Days" by Mr Jack Seabright, whose mother had belonged

to the Guild in Tewkesbury where he was brought up. Lots of people, he said, were poor in those days — in many cases the staple diet consisted of bread and jam, potatoes and bones stewed with vegetables. Children went blackberry picking, mushrooming, etc to help out with food. The then manager of the Co-op store was Mr Maynard, and he sometimes gave parents "tick" so that they could buy food for their children when times were bad. The dividend helped. If it hadn't been for the help given, many more children would have suffered rickets due to malnutrition. Mr Seabright won a place at the Grammar School, but his parents were too poor to send him. A local charity stepped in and donated £10 a year. Sadly he was orphaned at age 14, but a local family took him into their home. A spirit of comradeship existed and everyone helped each other. But despite the poverty he said they used to have big social events. Everybody took part, and they made

their own amusements. Mrs Graham gave a vote of thanks and refreshments were served by the Committee.

Mrs L. Clark, Secretary

Ashton-in-Makerfield Guild celebrated their 80th birthday earlier this year. Members wearing period gowns were joined by friends for a superb meal. Among the guests were Member/Relations officers, Mr J. Preston and Mr T. Briggs, accompanied by their wives. Mrs M. O'Donnel represented the Lancashire Section, and councillors R. Lyon and E. Foster were also present. Members presented a play researched and written by Mrs F. Stabler, depicting the first meeting in 1906, in the presence of Miss M. Llewellyn Davies, when the Guild was formed in Ashton. Further entertainment was provided by Mrs R. Dolan and Mrs A. Hampson, who performed the dance of the Roly-Poly's.

W. Wilson, Ashton-in-Makerfield Guild



Mrs Irene Hickman writes to say how pleased she was to read about the certificate given to Meir Branch for help given to T.S. Jervis II Sea Cadets. I was awarded a beautiful framed certificate by the Council of Sea Cadets Corps for help and service given over the past 17 years on Committee of Training Ship "Stirling". This unit has won the 'Canada Trophy' for best unit in UK for the second year, and are world champions with their 'Gun Run'. My Guild has always over the years been very supportive for which T.S. Stirling are very grateful, and we would like to send best wishes to T.S. Jervis.

I. Hickman, Kingshurst Branch

Brimington Guild celebrated their 50th anniversary with a party at Bradley Hall, Chapel St. President Mrs Kathleen Bailly cut a special cake helped by Mrs Violet Orwin, Mrs Margaret Cooper, Mrs Nora Spowage (who made the cake), and Mrs Annie Potter. Drama producer, Mrs Daisy Shooter, presented "The Show Must Go

On" featuring Mesdames Kate Adey, Betty Blower, Evelyn Lane, Vera Knights, Ethel Smith and Sybil Youd. There were also musical items by Mesdames Rose Sharman, Helen Hardy, Olive Rolt, Anne Orwin and Kathleen Bailly. Daisy Shooter and Betty Blower recited poetry.

Members of the Wednesfield branch have recently raised £100 for charity at just two events. £60 was raised at a jumble sale and given to "Hearing Dogs for the Deaf Association". (This has given me and a few other members great pleasure. Perhaps some of you remember how we tried to persuade you to adopt this as your New Century project, but it was a new association and most of you had never heard of it.) At a Coffee Evening £40 was raised and given to the National Children's Home. A very worthwhile achievement on the part of the Wednesfield Guild.

Sylvia Nixon, District Secretary

"Phyllis solves a Russian riddle" read the headlines in a copy of the Evening Telegraph which was sent to me early this year. The origin of a linen tablecloth embroidered with the names of 830 war-time Coventry women had been baffling the curator of a Russian Museum for many years. Who wove the tablecloth? Who collected the signatures? How did it become to be on display in the Battle of Stalingrad Museum in Coventry's twin town of Volgograd? The curator was approached by a Russian journalist who told the tale of the tablecloth in the magazine Soviet Women. Barbara Thomas who takes the English edition of the magazine in Cardiff, wrote to the Evening Telegraph in an attempt to trace the Coventry women and put them in touch

with the Museum. When the paper rang the secretary of Coventry Co-operative Women's Guild, the mystery was solved instantly. Phyllis Davies had embroidered her name on the cloth, so had her friends Alice Charlton, a past President of Bryn Road Guild, and Marion Gurden whose mother, Evelyn Hibberd, actually presented the tablecloth to a Russian delegation visiting Coventry in 1946. Phyllis explained: "Bryn Guild (now closed) paid for the cloth and silks out of their own funds. We then paid sixpence each for the privilege of embroidering our own names on the cloth and raised £60 towards medical aid for our Russian allies." Phyllis has since written to Barbara Thomas and the Russian curator in Volgograd.



A Centenary Gift with a Difference

This was the wish of the Heswall Branch, and a suggestion by one of the members finally decided them that it would be a Tapestry Kneeler to the Parish Church of St Peter's, Heswall. Consultations were held with the experts of this kind of work as to design and colour. Finally it was agreed the main colour would be rural green, the lettering and dates to be in heraldic gold and the centre piece the cornflower, which is the emblem for Lancashire, to be in royal blue highlighted at petal tips in pale blue.

At last we were informed our Centenary Kneeler was completed, and our next task was to organise this special event. A date and time of service was arranged with the vicar and invitations to guests, including the Mayor and Mayoress of Wirral were sent out. Other guests included a county councillor, the Executive C.R.S./NW Region and member of the Regional Board, Member Relations representatives, Member Relations Officer, Sectional Sec-

Pictured with the Kneeler are from left Mary Barlow (Asst. Treasurer), Mrs Jean Roberts (Chairman), Rev. Phillip Dennison, Dorothy Jones (Secretary) and the Mayoress of Wirral Mrs Rosemary Lindsay.

retary of the Lancashire area and Guild members representing branches in the surrounding area of Wirral and Merseyside.

A buffet lunch was arranged to follow the service, also a double decker bus was hired to transport everyone to and from the church. As our room is rented we sought permission to give the room an extra facelift and so our little band of volunteers set to work armed with cleaning materials, and finally floral arrangements were placed on tables and every conceivable corner, and the transformation was very satisfactory. At last the special day arrived and at 10.00 am our bus transported us to church. The Mayoress arrived at 10.25 and was met and escorted into church by the Chairman. During the service four guild members took the offerings followed by the sec-

retary presenting the Kneeler at the Altar for Dedication. The service was followed by Holy Communion. Eventually, we all arrived back for lunch, and everyone present was introduced to the Mayoress, who then left to attend another function.

As this was our 65th Guild Birthday it will always remain a special event which we can look back on with pride and achievement. Our Guild Centenary Kneeler will remain a lasting memory in an appropriate place for everyone to see.

Dorothy Jones, Heswall Branch

The Senior Branch at Portsmouth celebrated their Centenary recently with other members of branches in their district with a buffet and wine evening. The Board of Directors presented them with an iced cake, the Chairman of the Education Committee presented the Guild with a gavel and block, and Mrs Eunice

Stump, National Vice President, presented the Secretary with a paper knife. The Guild has a history of very active members both past and present of which they are very proud. They had three members serving on the Education Committee in 1897 which was a real achievement in those days, and they have two members serving on the present Education Committee. One member served on the Board of Directors, and many represented their Guild on voluntary organisations. One of their founder members, Miss Sarah Ragg, of whom they were very proud, remained a member until she died aged 100.

A second celebration took the form of a Tea Dance with 200 guild members and friends taking part.

The photograph shows the President, Mrs O. Fielding and the Secretary Miss V. Kerridge, looking at some of the cards they received and two of their oldest members Mrs A. Webster, 84 years and Mrs E. Kerridge 89 years, who was Treasurer for 25 years.

V. Kerridge, Secretary



South Staffs. District welcomed the National Officer, Miss Diane Paskin, as the speaker at their A.G.M. at the Co-op Rooms, Walsall, earlier this year. Members were very pleased at this opportunity to meet her (she continues to be welcome where ever she goes). They also held a District outing, when members enjoyed a tour of the "Equity" shoe factory at Leicester.

Sylvia Nixon, District Secretary

Mrs Olive Ray, a former secretary of the Codsall Guild has been honoured by the people of her village. She served as secretary of the guild for 23 years, works on the welfare committee for old folk and was given an MBE in 1973 for her community work. Now the people of Codsall have given her their Annual Award, and Mrs Ray aged 80 of Bakers Gardens was presented with the Civic Society Annual Award at a meeting of the Society. They gave it in appreciation of her work as Leader of the village's Forget-Me-Not club for the past 21 years. "I was surprised to be chosen for the award but also very pleased," said Olive after the presentation by Civic Society President, Mr Ernest Gaskell. "It is always nice to be able to do something for your own village." Congratulations (Ed).

Sylvia Nixon, District Secretary

Help the Aged's Silver Jubilee year aim of raising £10 million took a step forward with the opening of a charity gift shop in Havant. Bedhampton Guild members were the first to volunteer their help and took the opportunity to tell Miss Tracey Dick who will run the shop all about the Guild. The shop in Market Parade is only the second to be opened in the South, but the organizers are hoping more will follow. The shop was opened by the Mayor of Havant, Mr Len Powell.

"YOU HAVE BEEN MY SALVATION"

These words were uttered by a member to our President. Mrs Dorothy Crawford joined our Guild at the end of last year when she moved with her husband to Moreton in the Wirral from Liverpool, and thought at first they had made a mistake, she was so lonely. Since being persuaded to join the Guild, her outlook has changed completely, now she has friends!

Sometimes the officers of Moreton Guild despair of raising interest in national affairs. Ask for resolutions—ask for letters to MPs — these questions or demands bring on a deathly silence. However, if a member is ill or goes into hospital, there is no lack of volunteer visitors.

More than one member has been mugged or robbed and sympathy and help

A FRIENDSHIP FAREWELL TO BILBOROUGH GUILD FROM MARGARET SMITH

F is for the friendly group who every Thursday meet
R is for the Rainbow Flag, so colourful and neat
I is for the ideas, which seem to know no bounds
E is for the delicious 'eats' with plenty to go round
N is for the noise we make, with lots of lively chatter
D is for 'do nothing' nights when we just knit and natter
S is for our sharing, knowing someone bothers
H is for the helping hand we offer out to others
I is for the icy nights, we turn out in all weather
P is for the people here whose friendship I shall treasure.

flow out in every direction. When we have a social, no task is too great, no effort spared, to make it a success. The refreshments table, thanks to our hostesses, is always a picture, and one member, Gladys Adams, always bakes a beautiful cake to be shared. Whenever we visit other Guilds or have a day out and the rainbow colours of cheerfulness are in evidence and the happiness of people completely at ease with one another is impressed on the outside world. The vests and squares for Mother Teresa flowed in, and some members have tried hard in our national contests, even getting into the finals. We do have speakers and many of them offer to return because of their welcome, and our President is quietly getting members used to taking a turn to give the vote of thanks.

I pose the questions — "Are we a typical Co-op Women's Guild? Do you recognise your own Guild?" We are fairly new and we have a long way to go, but we are in a Co-operative organisation, and co-operation should start at branch level.

Edna Davey, Moreton Guild

Well, ladies, your comments please, is this your guild? Is something missing, could your N.E.C. or sections help and if so in what way? The N.E.C. has spent these last two and a half years getting the Guild back on its feet, and becoming a campaigning organisation again, and I can say we have succeeded thus far and have a higher standing with the Co-operative movement than for some time. Now perhaps the time has come to turn some of our attention to the branches and your comments and suggestions could help. Send them to me or straight to head office by October 11th if possible, and they could be on the next N.E.C. agenda. (Ed.)

A DAY OF PEACE

In this, the United Nations Year of Peace, the N.E.C. agreed to co-operate with all organisations in their Peace conferences, so I was pleased to accept an invitation to represent you all at a special meeting of the League of Jewish Women to commemorate the U.N. International Year of Peace. I was most warmly welcomed and invited to take part in a private ceremony before the meeting, when Lady Jakobovits, the League's Hon. Vice President and wife of the Chief Rabbi, planted a Field Maple tree in the Tavistock Square Park facing Woburn House, helped by their President, Mrs Shiela Shear. It was a very moving ceremony. The Mayor of Camden, a young lady, was also present both at the tree planting and the meeting in the afternoon. Over a hundred women's organisations were represented and heard Mrs Leila Siegel, World President of I.C.J.W., talk on "Women's Share in U.N. Peace Plans. Lady Jakobovits gave a very moving address on what life was like for her family in 1940, and how they all owed their escape to her baby brother's cries, which were heard over the river they could not swim. On hearing them a brave young soldier pleaded for permission to go over and save them.

Tea was served after the meeting which was extremely well organised, and the hostesses made sure you had plenty to eat and drink, and talked to you about your organisation and theirs, which is a charitable one.

Violet Aldous, N.E.C.

A RESTFUL RETREAT

I had heard a great deal about the Mary McArthur Home at Poulton-le-Fylde, Lancashire, and eagerly looked forward to my first visit. I caught the train from Blackpool, got off at Poulton and turned right outside the station. I walked along

the road and then caught my first glimpse of the Home. The Home lies back from the road and has an air of tranquillity. I received a very warm welcome from the staff and was given a refreshing cup of tea. The Home has a very friendly, warm atmosphere. The ladies staying there were leaving the dining room after breakfast, and some were settling down in the lounge. The dining room and lounges are all comfortable with pleasant views of the gardens. Pauline Watson showed me around the Home. Some of the bedrooms have recently been redecorated. Most of the

ladies who stay at the Home have to share a room and this encourages friendships to blossom. When visiting the Mary McArthur Home it should be remembered that it is a holiday home and not purely a convalescent home. We in the Co-operative Women's Guild should also remember that we are just one of the women's organisations who support the Home. We should also remember that if we don't give the Home our support then it will not be there for us to use.

Diane Paskin

1st Prize Winning Poem by Mrs F. Stabeler, Ashton-in-Makerfield
WHERE HAVE ALL THE SUMMERS GONE

It must have rained
There must have been at least one storm
Yet, in truth, I swear, my three remembered summers,
Three select, coherent, glorious summers
Bore no damp spot.
'Childhoods Cleanings' were totally sunny
And the sole wetness was in socks,
Frocks and Petticoat Frills,
Accidentally dipped in the muddy edges of the brook,
Furthest limit of our domain,
Bordering the cowpat-splattered meadows,
The neglect-damaged walls,
The stabbing nuisances of many hawthorn hedges,
And weedy hidey-holes,
Unfrequented by sudden-calling parents,
With their startling, hated, invasions of our dramas.
For in those three absorbing summers,
We were three-dreamers, rulers, goddesses!
Me, the sparrow-legged Minerva,
Brandishing my Brownie belt authority,
(One hundred small slaps or one mighty lash)
Leading Nipper and Mags
Into the overwhelming thrills of other worlds:
The trash heap of an abandoned bottle-works
Became the jewel-house, treasury of prized opals,
Scarce rubies, delicate amethysts.
(Diamonds were common and despised)
For Royalty had to be suitably adorned
And Nipper stole the precious tube of glue

From her father's private woodwork shed.
We sold the old lemonade bottles
To a gang of masculine bandits,
Who had heaved themselves, macho-muttering
Onto the crumbling walls around our treasure house
And had feebly aimed their lobbed potatoes at us,
From their grubby, clumsy fists.
We never included them in our secret arts,
Though at odd moments, we were intrigued
By the redness of their mouths' insides.

Nipper Mags and me
We went on hours-long expeditions
To imaginary neighbours' kingdoms,
Scorning their puny deeds
With epithet-loaded venom.
We could do anything better than they!
The noble, mythological heroes
Of our bedtime readings
Were mice compared with us
Ah! what superior beings these three!

Sometimes we were sad that enemies were so few.
We dared not challenge the farmer — too big,
Or his son, moustache brown-speckled
With chewing tobacco spittle -- too ugly.
He could call up his wicked ally,
The milk-cart horse, docile crust-cruncher in harness
A bared-teeth monster in the meadow,
Froth flying from mouth, thunder-hooved,
He would chase us through the hedges,
Even in the twilight, till, bloody-kneed,
We found sanctuary in the fence-guarded
Vegetable plot behind Mags house.

It all had to end, of course,
Sparrow-legs caught the library reading room bug.
Mags, seized by family ties,
Moved to a real city.
While wee, cheerful Nipper
Was tamed by indoor dancing lessons,
And, worse, confined by elocution practice,
She was being made into a lady!
There were to be No More Summers.

2nd Prize Winning Poem by Mrs E.A. Mays, Havering Park

WHERE HAVE ALL THE SUMMERS GONE

Where have all the summers gone, I wonder as I dream,
Of children playing in the sand, of castles and ice cream,
The days we spent at London Zoo, the animals galore,
Journeys on the tramcars, we didn't ask for more.

Where have all the summers gone, I wonder as I doze,
The milkman with his horse and cart, the outside loo that froze,
The coalman calling weekly, his face all cold and black,
With coal at 2/6 a bag, he carried on his back.

Where have all the summers gone, I wonder as I sit,
Remembering the days of war, the shops and streets unlit,
We walked the streets alone at night without a single fear,
We slept in air raid shelters, until the last all clear.

Where have all the summers gone, I wonder as I write,
The albums full of pictures, the girls in bridal white,
The boys in blue or khaki, their hair short back and sides,
Their faces full of youthfulness, their hearts with British pride.

Where have all the summers gone, I marvel as I see,
Computer games and videos, and colourful T.V.
We didn't fly the oceans for holidays in the sun,
But with whips and tops and five stones, we had a lot of fun.

Where have all the summers gone, I wonder as I rest,
From our big sister hand-me-downs, to shoes for Sunday best,
We'd never seen a mini skirt or hair dyed greens and reds,
We had no fitted carpets, electric blankets on OUR beds.

Where have all the summers gone, I wonder as I speak,
Of Bing and Frank Sinatra and dancing cheek to cheek,
We'd never heard of Adam Ant or Superman or Rambo,
But with our wind up gramophones, we danced the waltz and tango.

Where have all the summers gone, but do we really mind,
The good old days have gone and left their memories behind,
We're living in the space age, grandchildren on our knees,
But with health, and time and our bus pass, we go just where we please.

We try to live just for today, and do our best to find,
The good things that surround us, the family ties that bind,
The friends we have, the sights we see, the joy in taking part,
Not 'where have all the summers gone' but when will the next one start.

BRAINS AND BEAUTY

Oh I do wish that I was good-looking,
Just to glance in the mirror and see
A figure so sylph-like and pretty
And say to myself 'Is that me?'

But do brains and beauty go together?
I ask myself, well, wouldn't you?
When the good Lord was handing out these gifts,
Was I at the end of the queue?

Well, there's no point in worrying at my age,
What has to be will be they say,
But just to be clever and pretty,
I'd love, if just for one day.

Now beauty is only skin deep, so I'm told
And I look in my mirror and smile,
For good health and true friends are much more important,
And they really make life worthwhile.

Marjorie Hurst, Manor Guild, Sheffield

THE PENSIONER (*Tune: Galway Bay*)

Have you ever tried to live on old age pension
And paid for all the things you really need
When you've paid for all your food and coal and shelter
The pension dwindles very small indeed.

There's no money left to buy the daily paper
Nor yet to buy the cheapest cotton reel
When you see your clothes are getting really threadbare
Just imagine how a pensioner must feel.

There are leaders whom we've trusted with our welfare
They're bound to know we are often short of pence
And yet they glibly talk of millions
On what they call defence.

We go to bed to save our light and fuel
And when the winter's hard and cold
Our money goes on various prescriptions
The penalty we pay for being old.

In the past we've been the backbone of the Nation
But now we've reached the road that starts to bend
All we ask for is an increase in our pension
To make happier our trip to journey's end.

V.E. Williams, Jubilee Branch, Grimsby

Seen recently in a Scottish Church Magazine

If nobody gave us a helping hand,
And nobody seemed to care,
If the prizes of life all went to the strong,
And nobody gave us a share,
If nobody had the time to give a thought to you and me,
And we had to struggle as best we could
What a hopeless world it would be.

Lending a hand to help the weak,
Can lighten another's load,
Giving our best with a willing heart,
Can brighten a lonely road.
It's on something to live for, someone to love,
That the purpose of life depends,
And there's nothing to equal the gladness and joy,
Of making and keeping friends.

Manor Guild

RECIPES

Well Balanced Open Sandwich

Bread and Butter — Fibre

Lettuce — Greens

Cottage Cheese — Protein

Pineapple slice (fresh or tinned) — Fruit

Grapes white or black — Iron

Glace cherry in centre of pineapple for decoration

Method

1 slice bread (brown in preference) and
1 or two lettuce leaves to taste. Next
layer cottage cheese, next pineapple slice
with grapes circled around the plate and
place cherry in centre of pineapple.

Kitty Spooner, Hoe St Branch

LEMON AND BARLEY or ORANGE AND BARLEY

2 ozs pearl barley (rinsed in cold water)

2 pts water

2 lemons or oranges (or one of each)

2 tblspns sugar

In Saucepan

Water, zest of fruit in water, bring to boil,
simmer for two hours with lid on, stirring
occasionally and leave to cool. Strain, add
sugar and juice of fruit and bottle.

Don't throw barley away. Put in dish,
mix milk, sugar and egg and pour over
barley and bake (gas 5) until set (barley
custard).

Mrs A. Wood, Manor Guild

Hint

A good use for empty denture tablet
tubes, handy for saving £1 coins and easy
for carrying in handbag.

Mrs A. Wood

Tip for cleaning silver. Soak it in good
hot washing powder, then polish it with
cloth while still hot, and you will not
need polish.

Mrs K. Wheeler, Wimpson Guild



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CO-OPERATIVE WOMEN'S GUILD



MAGAZINE

ISSUE NO. 8

HELLO GUILDSWOMEN

A Happy New Year to you all and I hope you had a wonderful Christmas, whether you had a quiet or very merry one or maybe like myself a mixture of both. Well Ladies all good things come to an end and this is the last magazine I shall edit, sad isn't it, or is it? You will have a new editor in Isobel Weedon, NEC member for the Southern Section, send your contributions to her at Head Office until you hear from her. I wanted this opportunity to thank you all for supporting me, and a special thank you to those Guilds who have never wavered in the number they have ordered right from the first copy, I very much appreciate that. It was the first time I have done anything like this and it was natural I should have some misgivings, but the help I received from the Cambridge Free Press Workers Co-operative and all the Guilds who sent in their contributions and their thanks and encouragement to me made it all worth while. I hope you will give Isobel the same help and support you have given me. I shall miss hearing from some of you because you have become friends, but that is what the Guild is all about isn't it. Bless you all.

Vi Aldous (Editor)

THE TREASONABLE MINCE PIE

If you enjoyed your mince pies you may be interested in the following. Before the Reformation mince pies were baked oblong to represent a manger, and the pastry figure of a baby was placed on top. The pie was eaten and the baby was carefully preserved. With Cromwell these pies were outlawed as idolatrous and the poet John Tayler said acidly that eating a mince pie was enough to get a man arrested for high treason. All church services were banned on Christmas Day which was declared a day of fasting. When Charles II was restored to the throne, the mince pie returned as part of the general jollifications, but by that time everyone had forgotten that the trouble had been caused by its oblong shape and it was baked round, just as it is today. Some of us like mince pies all year round these days, so here are some ideas for serving mince pies with a difference. Heat and serve with a dollop of ice cream or add chopped canned pineapple to the mince-meat before baking. Happy trying.

Madge Taylor, Cambridge Central.

Around the Branches



SAVE OUR SHOP

Angry members of Abbots Langley Guild supported by local customers, staged a protest outside their local store, when the CRS closed it out of the blue with only a week's notice to staff and customers. They collected 596 signatures in 4½ hours which were sent to Mr W. Farrow, and letters of protest were sent to Mr S. Connal and members of the Regional Committee. Photo shows Mrs P. Gray, District Sec., Mrs J. Dyer, Mrs H. McSephney, Mrs G. Austen, Mrs I. Noise and Mrs C. Wilson, while in the background are other Guildswomen and an angry man customer. We wish them all well.

C. Wilson, Branch Sec.

The Cambridge District held a Day Rally in the Societies Conference Room. The Food Trades Officer arranged for a speaker from Manchester on Healthy Foods, and gave a slide show to illustrate her talk.

Members learned a lot about food additives, some harmless, others not necessary at all, and some harmful to some people. It was suggested we all read the labels more carefully in future. Cheese and wine were laid on for lunch, and were thoroughly enjoyed.

Mrs Norah Willis was the speaker in the afternoon, and she spoke on her work with the International Co-operative Alliance, especially in regard to women. Members were fascinated by her tales of women in other countries and she was given a warm ovation. She said it was always a pleasure to talk to Guildswomen and she had thoroughly enjoyed her visit.

Diane Paskin was also with us, and spoke on all the Guild was trying to achieve, and our project for UNICEF.

Mrs A. Edwards was in the Chair and gave a vote of thanks to all who had contributed to a wonderful day.

A. Halls, Cambridge.

Hants General District held a Tea at the Arts Centre, Weymouth. It was a beautiful sunny day and a pleasant occasion. Mrs Barbara Pidsley, National President, gave a talk on UNICEF, and Chains of Office were very much in evidence. Photo shows Mrs D. Squirrel, District Chairman, Mrs D. White, District Sec., Mrs B. Pidsley, National President and Mrs H. Mapstone, President Weymouth Guild.

Beverly Gillam, Sec. Weymouth.



WINNERS ONCE AGAIN

Springhouse Young Wives Guild of Corringham, Essex, took the First Prize in their local Carnival Parade for the third year running. This was a thrilling occasion for them as they also celebrated their Guild's 21st birthday this year. Their theme this year was the Co-op Cockneys. Red, white and blue rosettes around the edge of their lorry, they set up a bar and a pie and mash stall, they sang lots of cockney songs, and their members were dressed up in brightly coloured costumes. It was a happy atmosphere they say waiting for the judges, though nerveracking at times. A big effort was put in by all.

They held their Annual Garden Party in the summer, the weather was superb they tell me, there were strawberries and cream, cake and sandwiches, and a little wine was enjoyed by all. A swim in the pool after a Funny Costume contest, to cool off caused great excitement. Some

preferred to sit under the shade of huge umbrellas, until the afternoon sadly came to an end. Their thanks are given to Lyne Finnigan for letting them use her garden once again.

They also celebrated the wedding of Prince Andrew and Sarah Ferguson in their own fun way. They all wore wedding clothes with buttonholes and big hats, some even had new shoes (which of course always pinch). A wedding cake was the centre of their buffet of cheese, biscuits and sausage rolls, and three different kinds of punch which made the afternoon somewhat rqsy? Some used their expertise in the card competition, and it was a very happy afternoon celebration. Like the rest of the nation we all love a romantic Royal Wedding. A surprise in store unknown to the rest of us, Lyne and Georgia dressed as Bride and Groom, and cut the cake with lots of giggles and a good time was had by all.

Sadly on a final note they tell me they have lost a very valued friend, Mrs Gladys Lannagan, a former Barkingside sec. and Eastern District sec. who, moving to Corringham to be near her daughter, became a popular member on the committee, often at Congress and always willing to help with the work as well as the fun. A very good friend she is dearly missed by us all.

Charmain Norris, Springhouse.

Wimpson Guild had a stall recently at the Church Caledonian Market and blazed their name above it. From the proceeds raised they sent £5 to the Mary McArthur Holiday Home at Pulton. Members also celebrated Co-operative International Day at the invitation of Member Relations Committee CRS Southern Region. A Group sang songs from around the world and a play was presented "The Galaxy's Guide to Survival, Fact And Folly of Nuclear Arms Race".

H.G. Sawyer, Wimpson Guild.

The South Eastern Section held their Annual Dedication Service and Rally at Norwich. The Service at Norwich Cathedral was conducted by the Reverend Cannon David Bishop, Vice-Dean of Norwich, who also gave the Address. It was a moving Service in a very beautiful building.

The Rally held in the afternoon was at St Andrews Hall. Mrs M.V. Aldous, NEC member, was in the Chair. A civic

Haverhill Guild held an Exhibition in their Library for two weeks, and raised many favourable comments from local people. June Muscroft a young guildswoman designed it herself, you may remember her as the winner of the first competition for the Magazine cover.

Frieda Niyogi, Haverhill Sec.

How about trying to copy this in your area, what a lovely lot of free publicity.
(ED)

welcome was given by the Lord Mayor of Norwich, Councillor Jill Miller, who was presented with a basket of flowers by the Chairman. Mrs I. Draper, Chairman, gave a welcome from the Norwich District. Mr B. Ames, President of Norwich Co-operative Society, also gave a welcome saying he was always happy to be among Guildswomen. The Speaker was Mrs Peggy Sirs, NEC member, her talk was entitled "Would You Believe It", a humorous and interesting talk of her year of office as National President. This was thoroughly enjoyed by all present, indeed one lady remarked, "I usually fall asleep during the afternoon, but not today, she was too good to miss anything." What higher praise could you have.

Mrs Aldritch, District Sec., gave a vote of thanks. Thanks were expressed by the Chair for the lovely lunch given to the officials and Mayor and her Consort, and all the help given in the arrangements for the day.



Upper Belvedere Guild in Kent spent a week's holiday at Weston-Super-Mare in September, and sent me this happy photo of their members outside Tintern Abbey in the Wye Valley which they visited while there.

L. Thomas, Upper Belvedere.



LET PEACE BEGIN WITH ME

This was the theme running through the Rally to Renew the Commitment to work for Peace organised by our National Officer with NEC support, in the Central Hall Westminster on Sat October 18th.

Before the Rally the National President, Mrs B. Pidsley, and National Vice President, Mrs D. Price, laid a wreath of white Peace Poppies on the Cenotaph before a large group of Guildswomen. Police obligingly held up the traffic while this was done, and then all made their way to the Central Hall. There was a large number present but not as many as we had hoped.

Portsea Island Choir and the Workers Musical Association Singers provided musical items. Poems, anecdotes and thoughts were read by NEC members, and the National Officer gave a speech which again followed, Let Peace begin with Me, a thought we should all remember.

Mrs Barbara Pidsley was in the chair and thanking all members who attended wished them a safe journey home.

THE DAY OF THE YEAR

To give it its full title, the "Yorkshire Section Service of Dedication and Thanksgiving" for the Co-operative Women's Guild was held at Christchurch Harrogate this year, with coaches from Grimsby, Chesterfield, Doncaster, Sheffield and many other places approaching 400 Guildswomen converged on Harrogate. The hymn "Oh Worship the King" accompanied the procession of Flag Bearers to the Altar. The International aspect was further emphasised when the Mayor of Harrogate, Cllr R. Fraser (who was accompanied by the Mayoress, Mrs R. Fraser), read the Preamble of the Nations Charter. The Section Secretary, Mrs Ruby Marshall, then read the appropriate passage from "Corinthians I Chapter 13. The singing of the Co-operative Women's Guild Hymn followed.

In his address the Reverend Canon R. McDermid spoke on the good work done by the Guild over the years and the wider service to the community which is their prominent aim.

The Guild song "These things shall be", followed by the Resolve concluded the Service.

Ruby Marshall

North Lowestoft Guild wished to show their thanks and appreciation to Mrs Ludkin, who had been secretary for over 30 years, and they presented her with a writing folio and pen. With regret her retirement came through ill health and an enforced stay in hospital. Sadly she has since had to sell her home but has settled in a Home on the sea front at Lowestoft, and still keeps in touch with her Guild friends.

The Guild has also been busy knitting squares and have given seven blankets for patients at Lowestoft Hospital. A letter of thanks has been received from Miss D. Wharton, senior nurse.



West Durham District says their International Day Conference was such a success they would like to share it with you all.

We spent the afternoon in the company of Miss Joyce Darlington who had travelled up from Manchester to be our Guest Speaker at the Bullion Hall, Chester-Le-Street. We now only have six branches in our West Durham District, but for those members who came along they were truly captivated by Miss Darlington's Address and the wonderful slides of India, which on hearing her commentary throughout the showing I'm sure we all felt we had actually been there. At 3.30 we had coverage from the local press of the presentation by Mrs Jennie Nelson, our Northern Section Secretary, to Joyce as she handed over the knitted vests, jumpers and blankets to "The Dustbin Babies Appeal". I can also add 3 days later a co-worker happily came and collected all the full plastic bags and assured me they would be on the way. Our thanks also go to our Member Relations who

provided the screen and projector and the boards for the illustration pictures of Mother Teresa and her nursing sisters in their wonderful work. Refreshments followed, then we were entertained by a member of the Salvation Army who delighted us with monologues and verse. A very successful day, we found Joyce's Caring, Sharing very inspiring.

Edna Swift, District Secretary

Brampton Park recently celebrated their 50th birthday. 38 members and delegates from Section, District and Guilds enjoyed a very nice buffet lunch with plenty to eat. A lovely iced cake made by one of their members with a glass of wine was a lovely finish to the lunch, and members then sang Jerusalem. It was enjoyed by all present. The RACS Member Relations Committee gave them a cheque for £20 to mark the occasion instead of the usual cake.

Ivy Light, Sec.



A Poem which is true of relative of the writer from Wimpson

Little Baby born so small
It is a miracle that you're here at all,
Doctors and nurses all help you fight
To try and make it through the night
Loving Parents hold your tiny hand
And pray that you will be strong
And grow into a healthy man.

H.G. Sawyer, Wimpson Guild.

Failsworth Guild also held their own Royal Wedding, the little bridesmaid dressed in white with ankle socks was only 65 says the sec. Most of the guests were over 70 and they all made their own clothes.

Have we got the oldest Guild member, they ask? She was 98 in November, does her own housework and is very active, and she also dresses the most beautiful dolls for charity. Another member knitted Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, Mrs Watkins who is 79. We are a happy guild says their sec. and we would like to wish all guilds Good Luck in all they try to do. We sang The Tree last night and we thought about the lady who wrote it. Good wishes to her and all Guildsisters everywhere.

Mrs E. Longworth, Failsworth.

BRADFORD CENTRAL. Recently our Guild visited the Rochdale Pioneers Museum and took with us a banner that had been hidden away in a cupboard for quite a long time. It was discovered when alterations to the store were made. The banner and some crockery were accepted by Mr R. Garrett on behalf of the Co-operative Union, and he took us over the Museum with a very interesting talk. It is a place well worth a visit with its little shop just as it was in 1844 when the Pioneers took it over. The journey from Bradford took us over some of the most beautiful wild Pennine Moors and we had a lovely day.

Anne Bennison, Bradford Central Guild



Newland Guild, Hull, despite the upheaval of having to temporarily move our meeting place, have enjoyed a lively period. In addition to discussions on Congress matters and newsletters, at least four members have given interesting talks. One told of her trip to Lourdes as a helper, another's reading of extracts from the book "Massacre of the Innocent" evoked a very good discussion on the lot of women and babies in the old days compared with present day.

A talk on Uganda at the time of Amin's deposal was heard with interest and our worthy President, Mrs Clarice Scruton (92 years), entertained us with talks on her life as a young live-in domestic and later as a munitions worker in the first World War.

We have supported the UNICEF appeal for immunising children and have sent off cash to treat two children. Since responding to the Dustbin Babies Appeal, we have sent blankets to our local Hospice and Oxfam. Our knitting needles will be working again very soon. One of our stalwarts is Mrs Nellie Cook (88 years) who joined the Guild in 1937. Her mem-

bership card for then shows subscriptions at 2/- per year, it went up to 3/- per year ten years later. Mrs Cook, who has held the positions of President, Vice President and Treasurer rarely misses a meeting and plays a valuable and active part in all our activities.

Mrs Jean Oxley, Newland, Hull.

Mrs Ida Bailey wrote a poem called "Our English Rose" and on impulse sent it to Royal Doulton, who immediately asked if they could use it in connection with the Garden Festival. The Royal Doulton theme is a rose called Festival Fanfare, and the poem has been framed and hung in the entrance hall to the Royal Doulton China Garden. The poem is now exclusive to Royal Doulton until after the end of the Festival, when they are going to present the framed poem to Mrs Bailey. She was presented with a Festival Fanfare plate and basket of roses by Miss Ann Linscott, Director of Public Relations for Royal Doulton.

We all send her congratulations I am sure.

I. Bailey, Meir.



Norwich Central Guild celebrating their Centenary



RAISING THE RAINBOW FLAG IN BASILDON, ESSEX

Guildswomen and Co-op Party members were out in force on Sat. 5th July to celebrate International Co-operative Day at Basildon, Essex, despite the unfavourable weather. They persuaded the local council to fly the Rainbow Flag on the Council Offices on this day. Photo shows County Councillor Ray Boulton presenting Councillor Alf Dove (Chairman Co-op Party) with a CRS Golden Jubilee Plate for the Basildon Council. Holding the flag is Mr Julian Fulbrook, Labour Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Basildon. Mrs F. Francis, Chairperson of the Divisional Committee, and South Eastern Secretary of the Guild is in the centre row.

READ IN A CHURCH MAGAZINE

Miss Honeybunch will sing her song "Rock me in my little bed" accompanied by the Vicar.

There will be a Mothers meeting on Tuesday and anybody wishing to become mothers, the parson will be there.

The preacher for next Sunday will be found hanging in the porch.

**Dorothy Verity, St James Guild,
Northampton.**

MONEY SAVERS

It is not always easy for some of us to help others who are worse off, but I have a plan that works. Whenever I get a money off coupon, I cut it out and use it for shopping, but do not spend the money I save. I put the money in a jar and keep it. Then when the charity envelopes come through the letterbox I have a little spare money to use and I don't have to touch my pension.

Mrs J. Welling, Watford.

LIVING ALONE

Living alone, some people think,
Is quite a sorry plight.

I keep busy, and beat the "Blues",
With music and books, and I write,
To many absent friends and my family sometimes,
Far into the night.

Each day I try to make this world,
A Happier place to be.

I chat, or go and entertain,
Other folks like me.

Friends ask me out, or in for tea, I go,
I feel it's only right,

But always I say, on any day,
But not on Tuesday night.

That's the night, I go to Guild,
And meet old friends, and we,
Though small in number, have some fun,
And chat, all speech is free.

When closing time comes, we have our tea,
And feel as well we might,
We are never alone when we meet at Guild,
Always on Tuesday night.

Gwen Spencer, Wimpson Guild, Southampton.

THE ISMAILI CENTRE

The invitation bore the insignia of His Highness Prince Aga Khan Imami Ismailia, and Doreen our National Vice-President and myself met in London on a sunny Saturday to represent the Guild at a "Get Together" with the Ismaili Women's Organisation at the Ismaili Centre at Cromwell Gardens. Built not quite two years ago it stands as an island near London's Museums, and though very modern it fits in well with the local architecture. It is used for religious, social, and cultural activities and is a source of pride for the Ismaili Community throughout the Country, and has won professional, public and press acclaim for its architecture and workmanship. We were met and welcomed by the Ismaili ladies on our arrival and shown into the lounge, where when all had arrived we were given a welcome from their Chair. This was followed by tea during which we were waited on, and talked to most of the ladies present who numbered about three to each guest so no-one could possibly have been left out. They were very interested in our Projects especially in the knitted blankets, and one said, "Yes I have heard of your organisation and all the good work you do". We discovered that only about 12 Women's Organisations had been invited and that we all had international connections, so we considered it was an honour for the Guild to have been invited. One of the ladies we talked to had a daughter at Nottingham University and chatted happily to Doreen who could answer her queries about it. We enjoyed our tea trying out new things to us, and found we liked them all, though there were fancy cakes for anyone who didn't. We were then taken on a tour of the Centre. The architect we were told was a German who had turned to the Ismaili faith, and the whole effect was one of light and

water. A fountain played in the entrance hall with seven small troughs running from it before disappearing underground, and a seven sided mural on the ground surrounding it. We found murals and other designs all had seven or five sides, a symbol in their religion of the Seven Days of Creation and the Five Senses. The walls were of bevelled glass and wood and the sun threw prisms from the glass forming rainbows over the floors. Glass, chrome, marble and fine brass fittings were the materials used, and the chrome bars of the banisters had small crooks in them every so often, a reminder that all their prophets were shepherds. The water from the fountains represented light said our guide and Allah was the Light of Day and Night in their religion, and so there were small circles in the roof covered with glass so even the night was not shut out in the dark. We were shown the beautiful library and reading room complete with books, armchairs and tables, and then taken on to the roof garden with its five fountains, the centre one for Allah and the four smaller ones for the first four prophets. All the shrubs had been chosen we were told for their sweet smelling flowers and here said our guide is where our two cultures meet, for we have the roof garden but the domes are on your Museum, and indeed they looked to be built on the further wall of the Centre. Lastly we removed our shoes and were shown their prayer room, again beautiful with marble and glass being used extensively and a blue carpet on the floor. Here our guide said goodbye to us, thanked us for coming and said how pleased they were to have shared their Centre and prayer room with us. A visit neither Doreen or I will forget.

Vi Aldous, NEC.

FRIENDSHIP

As I surveyed my house with pride
Not a speck of dust in sight
Floors so clean and windows bright
No pets here to chew and bite.

No one here to tell me this
No one to tell me that
Keep myself to myself
That had always been my rule.

And yet a pain of ennui surged
When a cheerful voice I heard
Voices with a happy ring
But didn't I have everything.

One day when walking down the street
And feeling rather down
A voice came from behind a gate
You do look sad come in and have a tete a tete.

Suddenly my heart grew light
As she gently drew me in
Her home was sparse no luxury here
No fancy crocks no cosy chairs.

I picked a path between the toys
All scattered round about
The little dog wagged his tail
The baby gave a shout.

"Mary" call me that she said
I've made a pot of tea
Please say you'll stay
And keep me company.

The time just flew I know not where
I never knew that people cared
And then to me she did reveal
A stranger soon would be
Joining that little family.

But now life's changed I have a friend
Yes Mary is her name
Now neighbours stop and have a chat
And wave a cheery hand
And in his basket warm and snug
Sam's asleep wrapped in his rug.

So if a friend perhaps you need
Look around and you'll succeed
I thank the day that voice called to me
Please come in and have some tea.

Irene Tapp, Honicknowle Branch

THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PEACE 1986

IF ONLY

How beautiful this world would be
If things would all come right
If nations lived in harmony
And cared naught for power and might
If only we could see this day
What the next day would bring
If only we could feel as free
As the lark upon the wing
And soar to heights undreamed of
Wide as the open sea
And keep alive sweet memories
How lovely it would be.
How beautiful this world would be
If all things held their peace
If only trust and love could reign —
If only we could view again
Everything in its place.

Ida Bailey, Meir

THE CO-OPERATIVE GUILD

We are happy all together
Helping others on their way
Let's extend the hand of friendship
Join our Co-op Guild today.
If you're feeling sad and lonely
Come and all your talents give
To this happy band of women
Come along and Live! Live! Live!
When times are hard, and friends are few
The Co-op Guild will welcome you
Don't stand around and look for more
Just enter through the Co-op door
Your smile comes back, all is now well
And that's a fact.

Norah Brown, Weymouth Guild

OUR GUILD

We meet twice a month, sometimes three
Not all gossip and cups of tea.
Discussions, Newsletters, Decisions are many,
An outing perhaps — money — have we any?
We'll raise some — a stall on the market,
A raffle, who knows. We'll not make a million
But that's how things go.
Two hours have gone by, a happy time,
Homeward we wend with goodbyes to our friends.
Mrs M. Steggal, Chairman, Harleston Guild.

MY LITTLE BOY

I see the experts are trying to plan our babies' sex
Whatever on the earth will they try to do next
You see so very many years ago
My husband and I planned it all so and so
He whispered there'll be a boy for me and a girl for you
Softly I murmured that will just about do
And it did not seem so very long
We had a little son who could do no wrong
But my head was always in a whirl
Waiting for the day I had my little girl
There would be frills and bows, a white wedding dress
Everyone would be toffed in their Sunday best
And me prim and proud in a nearby pew
With a hat and frock all very brand new
Then one bright and sunny day
Our new baby was on its way
Said a voice come and look at this bundle of joy
You've guessed too, haven't you, it was my little boy.
Mary Sapsed, Letchworth Guild

GIRLS OF THE GUILD

We are the Girls of the Harleston Guild
We meet twice a month, on a Tuesday
We read and discuss Head Office news
We never have a "Blues" day.
We all bring something that can be sold
To boost our funds for a coach ride,
We have a speaker whenever we can
And meet all commitments with pride.
We advertise our meetings and hope all the time
To get more new members is our aim.
We have a cup of tea and go our own ways
Looking forward to meeting again.
We've been together now for thirty eight years
Some go (sad), others join (hooray), we soldier on,
The Guild is the tops in Women's clubs
We'll be there when all others are gone.
Anna Aldrich, Sec.

WEDNESDAY MORNING AT THE GUILD

It's strange that when life's work is done
There's no more Hurly Burly
But every morning just the same
You wake up bright and early!

All excepting Wednesday morn
When Bed seems so delightful
Must get up though, can't be late,
To miss Guild would be frightful.

Hurry Scurry, through the park
Watch the birds go soaring,
Lovely when the weather's fine,
But rotten when it's pouring!

At last the meeting hall is reached
A welcome sight to see
But more than welcome is the taste
Of that gorgeous cup of tea.

Then round comes the "Goodie" tin
Weight conscious folk won't risk it,
Methinks 'twould be another tale
If it were chocolate biscuit!

The bell is rung, and all is quiet
While Olive has her say
Have we serious things to do
Or is it "Fun" today?

There's Olive, Jean and Mrs Webb
Old hands at the game
Vi and Edna, Anne and Grace
With similar claims to Fame.

Heather, Edna, Marjorie
All lower down the scale
But when their help is needed
They're never known to fail.

Teresa, Gladys, Ida,
Newcomers to the fray
They seem to quite enjoy themselves
We certainly hope they'll stay.

Dearie me I nearly missed
Nina, Celia, and Joan,
But at this point words fail me,
They're just three on their own!

I finish most sincerely
For now I have to go
You're the Greatest Bunch of Ladies
It's my privilege to know.

Joan Butler, Northfield Guild.

Joan has been a Guild member only about a year says Jean Elkington, President, so you will understand how delighted Northfield Guild were with the sentiments expressed in her poem. (ED)

